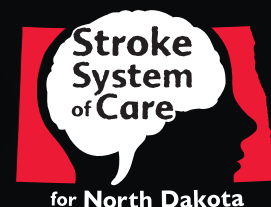




## ***FAST* Access to Stroke Care**



# **Women and Stroke**

**Stroke kills twice as many women as breast cancer**

**Women account for 60 percent of all stroke deaths**

**Stroke is the 3rd leading cause of death for women**

While the general risk factors for stroke—high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, atrial fibrillation, family history, age and obesity—apply to both men and women, there are additional risk factors that women need to know:

**Migraines:** A history of migraines with auras (visual disturbances such as flashing dots or blind spots) can increase a woman's stroke risk two and a half times. More women than men suffer from migraines.

**Birth Control Pills:** Women who take even a low-estrogen birth control pill may be twice as likely to have a stroke than those who don't, and the risk may increase if other risk factors are present.

**Hormone Replacement Therapy:** Estrogen and estrogen-progestin medications increase stroke risk in women over the age of 35, especially among smokers and women with additional risk factors, such as high blood pressure.

**Pregnancy:** Normal pregnancy can increase the risk of stroke. Women who have developed dangerously high blood pressure in pregnancy (preeclampsia) have an increased risk of stroke during the first six weeks after giving birth.

**Menopause:** Menopause increases the risk of cardiovascular disease in general, but women who start menopause early (before the age of 45) are twice as likely to suffer from stroke.

**Other Conditions:** Autoimmune diseases such as diabetes or lupus can increase the risk of stroke.

**Clotting Disorders:** Women who've had more than one miscarriage may be at higher risk for blood clots, which can increase their chance of stroke. Other signs of a possible clotting disorder can include previous history of clots in the legs (deep vein thrombosis) and livedo reticularis, a mottled purplish discoloration of the skin.

*If you have any of these risk factors, talk to your doctor. Make sure you and your family know the signs of stroke and act FAST to call 9-1-1.*

**Know the signs of stroke and call 9-1-1 for the fastest access to the Stroke System of Care for North Dakota.**